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John Caldwell
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BISHOP CALDWELL

ON THE

INSTRUCTION OF NON-CHRISTIANS

IN THE

MYSTERIES OF THE CHRISTIAN
RELIGION.

A REPLY

BY

THE BISHOP OF BOMBAY.



*BISHOP CALDWELL ON THE INSTRUCTION OF NON-
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RELIGION. A REPLY BY THE BISHOP OF
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PERHAPS I ought to apologise to my Brother Caldwell for replying to his pamphlet in a newspaper.† Whatever Bishop Caldwell writes is sure to command a sale. My only chance of being read lies in coming before the public in this form.

I do not offer an apology for venturing to reply to him at all, because the question is one of principle on which every Bishop is bound to make up his mind for himself. Were it a matter on which experience alone could justify a man in having an opinion, I should not venture to enter the lists with him.

The principles involved in the question are, I take it, two in number—

1. What we owe to God's truth.
2. What we owe to the souls of men.

* *On Reserve in Communicating Religious Instruction to Non-Christians in Mission Schools in India: A Letter to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Madras.* By Bishop Caldwell. Madras, 1879.

† *The Bombay Church Chronicle.*

I trust I shall be pardoned for saying that the first is almost ignored in Bishop Caldwell's treatment of the subject. Indeed the only part of his pamphlet in which my Brother grows somewhat severe is in his handling of a letter of my own (pp. 62 and 63) in which I had expressed my opinion that instinctive reverence for God's truth formed a factor in the problem to be considered.

But I will not begin with these principles, because the way must first be cleared for their treatment. Bishop Caldwell claims to demolish my plea for the instinct of reverence by bringing to bear on that "rampart of leaves and flowers," as he calls it, "the shattering, irresistible force of a Krupp gun of Divine Command." And I allow that if he is right in his conception of what that command implies, he is right also in saying that my "instinct" must not be allowed to assert itself against it—neither must any human opinion as to how one may best benefit souls. If the command of our Lord Himself, that we are to "preach the Gospel to every creature," means that all the mysteries of the Atonement and the Incarnation are to be taught to every heathen child who is induced to attend a Mission School by the bribe of a secular education, then I have no more to say about what I conceive to be due either to God's truth or to human souls. If my Master has settled the question I am not rash enough to attempt to reopen it.



But there is one whole book of the New Testament which furnishes a commentary on that command. It is on the Bishop's handling of that commentary that I propose to join issue with him first.

If I can show that he is mistaken about this, can show that our Lord's command as interpreted by the Apostles themselves does not compel us to teach the whole truth to those who cannot be prepared to receive it, then the way will be open for the arguments which I would draw from the principles which I have brought forward: then it is competent to us as Christian teachers to draw our independent conclusions as to the way in which the training of our pupils must be affected by these two considerations:—

How far must the proclamation of Divine Truth to unbelievers be restrained by the instinctive reverence which we feel for that Truth itself?"

How far shall we benefit children's souls by teaching them, in their non-Christian condition, truths which only the assistance of the Holy Spirit can enable them to comprehend to their souls' health?

The Bishop claims then to have proved in his pamphlet, from the Acts and the Apostolic Epistles, that the Apostles, were they in India at this day, would teach the whole Gospel of salvation to the children of non-Christian parents who attended their Missionary Schools, although they came there with

no intention of becoming Christians—indeed, with a decided intention the other way on their own part and that of their parents.

The limited space at my command will not allow of my reviewing in detail the Bishop's treatment of the Apostolic preaching. In general, the first point to be remarked is that a very strong inference is to be drawn from the slender amount of proof adduced by so able a writer from the one book which is really in point. If a man of his conspicuous ability can get no more than he does out of the Acts, there can be very little there. Still more would this remark apply to one passage in the Doctor's argument. On pages 16 and 17 of his pamphlet he compares the history of S. Paul's preaching at Ephesus with his address to the Ephesian elders at Miletus; and argues that because the Apostle says in that address that he had testified to Jews and Greeks "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," it follows that in mixed assemblies of non-Christians of every sort he had proclaimed to unbelieving ears all the mysteries of the Christian religion. I should have thought that if there was one passage which showed the difference S. Paul made in his preaching according to the audience which he had before him, it was this address to the Ephesian Presbyters. *To them*, and to the Church which they represented, he says that he "had not shunned to declare all the counsel of

God." *To the Jews and Greeks* the substance of his preaching had been "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." What else should he have preached to them? What else can the Bishop suppose that I, and those who think with me, wish to have taught in Missionary Schools? The sinfulness of sin, the fact of the Resurrection, forgiveness through Christ—there is the substance of the preaching of the Acts. And neither in this nor in any other of the places which Bishop Caldwell adduces as his proofs, do we find in the Acts of the Apostles that the preaching of these three things came short in the first preachers' estimation of a fulfilment of our Lord's last command. If S. Paul had said to the elders that in preaching to any non-Christian he "had not shunned to declare all the counsel of God," the Bishop would indeed have made a point by adducing the address at Miletus. But this was exactly what S. Paul did not say. Nay, we read that when "divers at Ephesus were hardened and believed not," he took away from them even what they had, the preaching of repentance and the Resurrection.

But the greater part of the Bishop's argument from the Acts consists of inferences from things said *about* the Apostles' preaching—they preached "the Gospel," "the way of salvation," therefore they must have taught all the mysteries of the faith to any one who chose to listen. I submit that

the whole of these inferences are a mere begging of the question—they ought to have said so-and-so, therefore they did say it. If instead of asking what they must have said, we take what it is recorded that they did say, we shall find that, as Bishop Douglas pointed out, they taught that the *Man* Christ Jesus was the judge of quick and dead, and that through this *Man* was preached the forgiveness of sins. His Godhead they never taught to heathens, or the nature of His atoning Sacrifice. Forgiveness through Him they taught of course. You cannot teach the sinfulness of sin without teaching that sin may be forgiven. But this is a very different thing from the glib acquaintance of Dr. Duff's Brahmin pupils with the Calvinistic answers to such questions as, "How may a sinner be said to be justified by faith?" or, from the singing which Bishop Copleston has again and again refused to listen to, in which non-Christian children in Ceylon are made to proclaim, "I am saved; I love Jesus; I have nothing to fear."

I say then without the least hesitation that, as far as the Acts are concerned, the Bishop's argument breaks down altogether. If the Apostles had preached to the heathen as he desires that we should teach them in our schools, he would have been able to adduce their teaching in black and white, instead of having to infer it from S. Luke's account. And the contrast between their preaching to the heathen and S. Paul's address

to the elders of the Church is as marked and distinct as it can be.

As regards the argument from the Epistles, one sentence is enough for the whole—the Epistles were addressed to Christian men. The Bishop argues that there are passages in the Epistles, notably in two Epistles to the Corinthians, which show that S. Paul must have preached to heathens all the truth about the Natures of our Lord and the mystery of His atonement for sin.

I deny the legitimacy of the inference altogether, and maintain that it could never have been made except in support of a foregone conclusion.

But I must examine some of the arguments in detail.

If the Apostle says in writing to Christians that he had known “nothing among them but Jesus Christ and Him crucified,” that he had “preached among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,” it is a mere begging of the question at issue to say that he taught them these things before they were baptized, in the same terms and with all the same fulness as after they were made members of Christ. The Acts tell us what he taught the unbaptized. The Epistles are his teaching to Christians. I should have thought the mere contrast of the two was conclusive against the Bishop’s whole contention.

But again, to go more into detail, he contends

that because the doctrine of Christ crucified is said to have been foolishness to the Greeks and a stumbling-block to the Jews, we must infer that there had been proclaimed to unbelievers the whole doctrine of the sacrifice of Calvary. Now I am far from maintaining for a moment, as the Bishop makes his supposed opponent maintain, that the Apostle only taught to the heathen, or that we should only teach to the heathen, "that Jesus, after living a holy life, died as a martyr to the high moral truths He taught, and as a pattern of patience and suffering." It is true, as he remarks, that "no Greeks would ever have regarded this teaching as foolishness." But to proclaim, as S. Paul constantly did, that Christ saves us from sin, is what I would have every missionary proclaim to all alike. But it is after by this proclamation he has made men feel their need of a Saviour, and to those only who do feel this need, that I would have him show *how* Christ saves us. And the fact, without the manner, of the Atonement was quite enough to cause contempt among the Greeks and scandal among the Jews. The bare idea of being saved from sin by "an impaled Jewish sophist" was food for laughter to the cultured Greek—witness Celsus (quoted by Dr. Liddon), who says that "the Christians worshipped no God, not even a demon, but a dead man." And to the Jew, a crucified Messiah was quite stumbling-block enough. And I must maintain that it is absolutely illogical to take the fact

that S. Paul preached a doctrine of the Cross which was foolishness to them which believed not, and to argue from this as a premiss that the whole manner of the sacrifice of the Cross may be taught to all alike, regardless even of the consideration whether they desire to hear it or not.

The presence of a child in a Mission School indicates nothing, either on his part or his father's, but the wish to qualify him for Government employ. Well, if the Apostolic comment on our Lord's words indicated that the whole counsel of God was to be taught to every person without distinction, the fact that the boy's presence in school indicated nothing more than this would be no reason for disobeying our Master. But if I am right in my contention that neither the practice nor the writings of S. Paul show that this was how he interpreted the command, then we are at liberty to draw our own conclusions as to what is required by the two principles which I laid down in my opening paragraph.

I may, perhaps, not be right in my contention ; but I make bold to say that nothing in Bishop Caldwell's publication has logically established the opposite.

To sum up, then, as far as I have gone—

The thesis which I have undertaken to maintain is, that we must be restrained by two considerations from teaching "the whole counsel of God" to the non-Christian children in our schools.

Those two considerations are—

1. Instinctive reverence for God's truth.
2. Regard for the souls of the children—to whom the knowledge of the truth will be hurtful without the teaching of the Holy Spirit to bring it home to them.

Bishop Caldwell has undertaken to show that we have no right to judge for ourselves on either of these two points—that our Lord's command to preach the Gospel to every creature, binds us to proclaim the whole truth to every person whom by any consideration, such as the bribe of a cheap secular education, we can induce to come and hear it.

He maintains that the practice of the Apostles in the Acts indicates that this is how they interpreted the command, and that this is further indicated by what they write in their Epistles.

If his interpretation of these books is correct, my two principles fall to the ground ; and therefore, before maintaining my principles, I was bound to do my best to overthrow the Bishop's arguments from Scripture.

I consider that I have overthrown them.

I have dealt with the arguments from Scripture by which Dr. Caldwell tries to show that neither reverence for God's truth, nor regard for what one conceives to be the good of souls, can justify us in withholding from non-Christians the fulness of Christian teaching. I have tried to prove that

the practice of the Apostles, as recorded by S. Luke in the Acts, shows that they thought they had preached the Gospel to every creature when they had proclaimed three primary truths—the sinfulness of sin, the fact of the Resurrection, forgiveness through the risen Saviour. I have tried further to prove, as against the Bishop, that there was nothing, as far as he had shown, in the writings of S. Paul himself to convince us that his preaching to non-Christians had ever gone beyond these three truths.

If I am right in this criticism of his position, then there is no barrier of unanswerable authority to prevent me from bringing forward my own thesis that there are two considerations to be taken count of before we teach non-Christians the whole faith—how is such teaching to be reconciled with the reverence which we entertain for God's truth? how far is it safe for non-Christians to be instructed by the medium of the mere intellect, in truths which must be spiritually discerned before they can benefit our souls?

But in addition to the arguments from Holy Scripture which I consider that I have already disposed of, Dr. Caldwell gives a list of authorities by whom he claims that his practice is supported; and I have a word to say about these before I proceed to my positive argument.

Let me begin with that claim which will give least trouble. My much revered predecessor, Dr.

Douglas, is pressed into the service by Bishop Caldwell, and brought forward as a supporter of that system which he did his best to overthrow. I confess that if this claim had been put forward under a less respected name, I should have been tempted to speak strongly about it. My predecessor published seven letters in the *Indian Church Gazette*, in which he dealt with the whole subject most carefully. It would not be too much to say that the pamphlet in which these letters are contained furnishes an exhaustive refutation of the arguments by which Bishop Caldwell defends his own practice. And all this he claims to set aside on the strength of a single rhetorical sentence in a letter written with a different object! And this in spite of the easily ascertainable fact that in the magnificent Charge, which was Bishop Douglas' last utterance to his clergy, he deliberately re-affirmed the position which he had argued out in the *Indian Church Gazette*. If Bishop Douglas may be cited as an authority for teaching the whole truth to unbelievers, I see no reason why Burke should not be cited as a Jacobin, or Macaulay as an admirer of the Stuarts.

The authority of Justin Martyr is claimed, I allow, with greater show of reason. That Father, it is said, addressed to a heathen Emperor an Apology for the Christian religion, in which he proclaimed the deepest truths of Christianity, the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and His Presence in the Eucharistic Celebration. These citations are

conclusive, no doubt, as showing that the *Disciplina Arcani* was far from universally observed in the Church of the early centuries. But this, I think, no one would be disposed to dispute. And writing openly about the Christian mysteries to prove their innocent and laudable character is, I submit, a very different thing from inducing people to come and be instructed in them by giving them a secular education. The fact that Justin published an Apology gave no inducement to any one to read it with a confessedly interested motive. It simply said to the world—come and see that we have nothing to be ashamed of—if you want to know our doctrines, here they are, make the worst of them that ever you can, and see if they render us worthy of persecution. I do not say that I would adopt Justin's method. But I do say that the fact of his using it proves nothing except that those who liked to read him might learn about Christianity if they chose. Did Justin or did any Christian Father drag truth through the mire as we have done? Did they say to a whole town full of heathen parents—we will teach your children anything you like, if only you will do us the favour of letting them learn the mysteries of our religion; they shall go home and do *pūja* in the temples to every deification of human lust; or they shall worship the One God without Christ under the teachings of a religion which blasphemes Him: only let them learn Christian truth in the morning, and they may

profane it the whole afternoon? I venture to say that if they had done this, the Roman world would never have been converted to a truth which its teachers held so cheap.

What I have said about Bishop Caldwell's use of Justin Martyr applies to all that he has adduced from other great early Christian writers. To prove that they did not always conceal the truth from any one who would read their books and become acquainted with it, is a totally different thing from showing that they would have approved of a great system for inculcating it without even a pretence that the learners were inquirers.

Here, then, I leave the preliminary question of authority, whether of Scripture or of uninspired Christian teachers, and go on to argue the case on its merits.

And first I maintain that instinctive reverence for God's truth ought to prevent its being taught broadcast to persons who have no desire to learn it to their soul's health. I am not going to consider for the present the case of persons who are, or may be presumed to be, inquirers. Even there I should probably desire to see more reserve than has been used by those whose practice is in question. But the present case, I repeat it once more, is that of persons of whom nobody even pretends that they desire to be made wise unto Salvation.

Is it a reverent treatment of God's truth to let it be used by youths in a school as a mere instrument

of intellectual training? They are interested, Bishop Caldwell tells us; they are receptive, intelligent, argumentative—very probably—but what is the subject-matter on which these good qualities are to be exercised? The hidden Mysteries of the Essence of the Godhead, the awful Transaction which passed upon the Cross between the Father and His Incarnate Son. When the Cherubim hymn the Triune Glory of the Godhead, we are told that they veil their faces with their wings. But this is a subject with which in missionary schools teachers are to stimulate the intelligence of pupils whose adoration is paid to Mahadeva. The elders cast their crowns before the Throne as they glorify the Lamb that was slain. Intellectual and argumentative interest qualify for hearing the subject of this hymn, in the estimation of the earthly guardians of its truths. I confess that I can but stare with blank astonishment when I find that men of reverent minds, who receive the truths of revelation for themselves with unqualified and adoring faith, not only subject them to this treatment, but cannot even understand one's protesting. The awful Fact which when transacted upon Calvary turned the noonday sun into darkness, is used as a school exercise for unbelievers. And when one shudders, they say—why not? Does a man call the attention of passing strangers to the fact that he wears on his finger that circlet of unornamented gold which signifies that the best hopes of his life have gone

down into his wife's early grave? Should we ask a man what ailed him if he winced at hearing his sister's Christian name tossed about from mouth to mouth among bachelors?

Without saying an unkind word about individuals, I think there must be something terribly wrong in the system, when men grow to regard the knowledge of the things of God as something about which there need be no reserve. It will be replied that the motive is a good one. I grant it thankfully. The teachers who are responsible for this system have believed, however mistakenly, that they were likely to make converts by its use. But the history of a great part of the religious world has too often been the history of such mistakes, of wrong acts done with right motives. And when good men treat God's truth in this way, one can but say that before they could so act, they must have been blinded by some terrible defect in the system under which they have worked. When one reads in the *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses* how the Jesuit missionaries in Paraguay used to set up a great Cross in the forest and celebrate mass by its side, amidst a crowd of wondering aborigines who had never heard the name of Jesus Christ, one begins to ask whether its spiritual significance was not degenerating into something more like magic. And when one is asked, as I have been asked in a Presbyterian school, to examine Hindu boys in Saint John, one asks whether a kind of

magical significance is not attached to the "reading of a chapter." Once for all, then, I acquit these good men of all intentional want of reverence for God's truth. They do not intend their boys to treat the Bible as a lesson in English, or in history, or in dialectic. But they teach it to those who will so use it, knowing that this is what they will do; and why? Because having lost sight of the fact that our Lord left on earth a great teaching Body called the Church, capable of endlessly adapting her methods to the endless varieties of men's circumstances, they believe that He left only a Book for each person to interpret for himself. By reverent approaches or by irreverent, through the conscience or through the mere intellect, by the drawings of prevenient grace, or by the bribe of a secular education, people have to be brought in contact with that Book; and till that is done you have done nothing. Granted this as the principle of work, and the whole system which I am deprecating must follow—the Bible to be put at all hazards into the hands of all persons. It is, I suppose, because I cannot believe in the power of the Bible without the Church any more than in that of the Church without the Bible, that I demur utterly to casting down Gospel truth before all comers without discrimination as to their power to receive it.

Those who believe in the mission of the Church, the "witness and keeper of Holy Writ," to divide

its teaching as the hearers can receive it, will be able to treat its truths with due reverence. Those who believe that each man has to grapple for himself with the whole mass of scriptural teaching, and evolve the truth for himself by the use of his private judgment, cannot afford to keep back anything out of reverence. How else can they expect anybody to learn? In all this I am speaking not of individuals, but of a school and a system. Individuals become enslaved to the tradition of the school, and so one sees the extraordinary spectacle of individual reverence for God's truth combined with this marvellous irreverence in the treatment of it.

Once more, before leaving this topic, if it could be proved by the practice of the Apostles that this was how they treated our Lord's command, all these considerations must go to the winds. But if, as I have tried to show above, Bishop Caldwell has conspicuously failed in substantiating his position from Holy Scripture; if the Apostles thought they fulfilled our Lord's command without treating His truth in this way, then the fullest weight must be given to all the considerations which I have adduced. God's truth is the revelation of His Nature, nay of His very Self. We are taught to pray that His Name may be hallowed, viz. that all by which He has revealed Himself may be treated with profoundest reverence. I know not how we can pray that prayer, and yet treat the

most solemn truths about His Being as though the mere power of the understanding, unassisted by the grace of the Holy Spirit, were capable of using them to profit.

The second consideration by which I would wish to regulate the communication of doctrinal truth to non-Christian hearers, is that of regard for the welfare of their own souls.

When a man seeks to know the truth with a view to believing unto salvation, it should be communicated by little and little, according as he is able to bear it. When there is no pretence of such desire, the communication should be far more guarded: and this is the case we have to deal with: catechumens and inquirers are not in question. To my mind, I must confess, there is something absolutely incomprehensible about a system which conveys all Christian truth to persons in the position in question. I read the statement of S. Paul that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Bishop Douglas shall speak for me here in an extract from one of those letters which Bishop Caldwell has so summarily set aside:—

"We have heard of a class of unbelievers engaged in the study of S. Paul's epistles. Is this a fact? If it be, may we be permitted first to say that such a fact shocks our simplest religious

instincts with a sense of the utter profanation of truth which it involves ; and, next, to ask those who are engaged in leading such studies, whether or not spiritual things are spiritually discerned ? The marvel to us is, that men of the schools of religious thought which are wont to proclaim loudest the need of spiritual vision, are the chief practical contradictors of its necessity. Out of the very chair of Calvin, practice proclaims the doctrine that spiritual things are intellectually discerned."

To the mind of unregenerate men Divine Truth is absolutely incomprehensible in the only sense in which *comprehension* applies to the things of God. An unconverted man may give accurate doctrinal definitions compared to which the best intellectual conceptions of many a pious Christian are the merest fragment of undefined apprehension. And yet that man may be more ignorant of God than a child first lisping out "Our Father." If these things are not known with the heart, they are not known at all. And if there is one truth which the Evangelical School has always professed, it is this incomprehensibility of truth to the unconverted. I have honoured many a man from whom I have differed, for the way in which he treated Divine knowledge as the exclusive prerogative of the redeemed. Yet here we have this enormous inconsistency in these very men's treatment of the heathen—fill their intellect with doctrinal truth, and

it is expected that their conversion will follow. I go so far as to assert that they are far less likely to be converted than if they had been treated with more reserve. Putting aside the natural fact that they lose respect for what is held so cheap, we have to deal with the supernatural fact that Divine Truth can never be a neutral power. It has its Nemesis for those who neglect it. And if it be said that they are heathens now, and that they only remain heathens when all is done, it must be replied that one who with doctrinal knowledge remains outside the faith, must of necessity be very differently placed from those who have never known the truth. To reject a Saviour whom one knows of is a very much graver thing, and involves a very much sorer judgment, than to do without one of whom one knows little.

And what is true of the position of the individual is true also of his influence on society.

I can imagine no responsibility more grave than that of flooding a country with unconverted theologians, men whose consciences have been hardened against truth, who know the ins and outs of Christian doctrine with no experience of its power over the heart. One man who can say, like the men of Sychem, "I have heard Him myself, and know with the innermost knowledge of experience that this is indeed the Saviour of the world"—one such man will be a centre of illumination from which the knowledge of Christ may shine

forth to illuminate a village or a neighbourhood. And one man who can cynically say, "I know it all, every detail of the doctrine: I know all about Christ and His Atonement, and He has never been anything to me; you need not go and be taught about this Saviour, you will remain just the same as before"—each such man is a stumbling-block to many who might otherwise have come to the truth.

The bare preaching of any part of the Gospel must, it is true, produce some such effects. It must be a savour of death unto death where it is not a savour of life unto life. But in the first place, the more intimate the knowledge the greater the condemnation; and in the next, it is just this detailed knowledge of the things of God which is likely to prove hardening to the soul, where that of facts and needs alone would have roused a desire for higher things. Teach a man only that he is a sinner and needs a Saviour; that the very God who cannot look upon sin has provided a Saviour for his needs; that He rose from the dead on the third day to prove Himself to be the Saviour; that that Saviour if rejected now will sit as Judge hereafter,—and on the one hand you have taught him as much truth as S. Paul's practice shows that *he* would have taught him; and, on the other, you have excited, not sated, the thirst for saving knowledge.

Until as much as this has been assimilated, you cannot safely offer more. If this teaching touches the heart, and the learner asks, "What must I do to

be saved?" then at once the grace of the Holy Spirit will furnish the supernatural apprehension which can alone make him grasp further truth. The very moment the conscience is at work, you may begin to offer a more advanced kind of doctrinal teaching. For the working of the conscience in man is the response to the Divine working of the Spirit: and where the Holy Spirit is at work, the man is capable of being led into all truth. I am dealing with principles now, and I have only gone thus far into detail, because it was necessary to do so in order to get the principles clear. And the principle, I take it, is this—that the great truths which I have proved to be the substance of the preaching of the Acts, the truths the scope of whose operation is to rouse men to feel after Christ, are the truths which alone should be taught to those who as yet are not inquirers.

Those truths, to repeat them once more, are the Holiness of God, the sinfulness of sin, pardon through the risen Saviour. Without some knowledge of these, the man is not in a fit condition for the work of the Holy Spirit to commence, for his conscience is not sensitized.

These, therefore, must be taught to all, as they were taught by Apostolic preachers. But until these have produced an impression *on the conscience*, no further teaching should be given. These are the preliminaries to the Spirit's work. The application

of anything more must be its sequel. And further knowledge without spiritual apprehension will but harden and deaden the conscience.

I propose now to sketch the positive principles on which the teaching of non-Christians in Christian schools ought in my opinion to be based, and then in the light of those principles to compare the rules of the S. P. G. with what Bishop Caldwell proposes in their place, in conjunction with the Bishop of Madras. Assuming all that I have laid down as to what such teaching must *not* be, I would take, as that which is to guide it, the rough division of Christian truth which I indicated in outline before. There are truths by which men are to be warned, and truths by believing which they are to be justified. The warnings and encouragements of the Gospel are one thing: its saving principles are another. These assume a desire to be saved: those are intended to elicit it. Until once the will has been set to work under the power of an awakened conscience, the saving principles of the Gospel have nothing that they can take hold of in the man. He may believe every truth of Christianity with a perfect intellectual assent: yet he does but believe to condemnation while his will is hostile or inactive. The principle on which I would go to work, in its fully developed form, may be expressed then in these propositions—that until you have got the conscience to work, each truth that you have impressed on the

intellect leaves the man just so much the worse—that the more fully he assents to the Gospel without believing unto salvation, the less likely is he so to believe, and the greater is his responsibility for not believing—that when you have filled his head with Christian doctrine and left his heart untouched, if you have not made him a worse man for this life, you have increased his condemnation for the life to come.

From this follows the practical method—that as all Christian doctrine is divided into two great parts, all teaching of that doctrine to non-Christians must be based on a similar division; that the instruction to be given to all alike must comprise those truths and those alone by which the conscience is roused into action and the will made to seek after God; that when these have done their work on the heart, and not till then, further truth may be safely imparted.

Of course it follows from this that instruction in saving truth can never be given broadcast in a school which is attended by non-Christians. If there are Christian children in such a school, they must receive their religious instruction entirely apart from the unbaptized. If there are inquirers after Christianity, the teaching which is to lead to full belief cannot be given in the form of a school lesson in which all alike take part. But at this point I must break off for a moment to exhibit side by side the rules which Bishop Caldwell

criticises and those which he proposes in their place, as regards this particular subject.

S. P. G. Rules.

*Rules proposed by Bishop
Caldwell.*

I.—That in mixed schools of baptized and unbaptized, provision be made for the separate religious instruction of scholars by the missionary or by a Christian teacher.

II.—That as soon as the converts are sufficiently numerous, separate schools be provided for baptized and unbaptized.

IV.—That Bible lessons or other religious instruction be never given to mixed classes of baptized and unbaptized.

VI.—That selected portions of, and extracts from, Holy Scripture and special Catechisms and Hymns and books of instruction in the Christian faith be prepared for the use of the unbaptized, apart from the Christian scholars, but under Christian teachers; and that the Church Catechism be reserved for the teaching of the baptized.

I.—That in all Mission schools not less than an hour daily be devoted to the religious instruction of all scholars, Christian and non-Christian; such instruction to be mainly grounded on the historical portions of the Holy Scriptures, especially those of the New Testament.

II.—That provision be made for the separate instruction, at least twice a week, of Christian scholars and scholars who are Catechumens, in the Church Catechism and systematic Theology.

VII.—That it is highly desirable that in all Mission schools, Bible classes for the religious instruction of non-Christian scholars be held on Sundays by the missionary or the head-master, which all such scholars shall be invited to attend; due provision being also made on that day for the separate religious instruction of the Christians.

The Bishop of Madras goes with Bishop Caldwell; I am all on the side of the Society. For although the revised rules proposed by Bishop Caldwell provide for separate instruction on Sundays and two other days in the week in

Church Catechism and systematic Theology, yet I cannot think that there are any religious subjects which should be taught to Christians and non-Christians at the same time and in the same words. To begin with, the whole teaching of Christian children must be based upon an appeal to their baptismal privileges. Their training in any religious subject must not be a mere lesson in the facts of Scripture history or the truths of Christian doctrine. The single specimen of religious instruction which the Church of England puts authoritatively into our hands, starts with the baptismal standing as the basis of all Christian instruction. Each child is taught in the Church catechism what he is to believe and do as regenerate and a member of Christ. And I can understand no other method of giving instruction to Christian children. To brigade them with the heathen for Scripture lessons and take them apart for Church Catechism and Theology, is to confuse their whole perception of their baptismal standing towards truth. You cannot bisect Holy Scripture and teach people that they learn one-half of its contents out of the Old Testament and the synoptic Gospels, simply as human beings; and that they learn the other half from S. John and S. Paul, and from the creeds and formularies of the Church, in virtue of the grace of their baptism. They must approach all truth from the standpoint of grace, or they will learn to approach it all from that of nature. To

treat them in the way proposed by Bishop Caldwell is to apply to Christian people the same principle which I have denounced as applied to their non-Christian fellow-scholars. It is to treat some spiritual truths as capable of being naturally discerned. We must choose between nature and grace. We cannot mix up the two.

And again in teaching a mixed class, what course is the Christian teacher to adopt? Is he to suppress, in instructing the Christians, all appeal to what their baptism involves? or is he to make appeals to the conscience of his heathen pupils such as the Catechism makes to Christians? It is not only what you teach children that matters, but what you take for granted in teaching. A class in which Christian privileges are assumed as the basis of all religious teaching, is no place for the unbaptized. A class where no such assumption is made, is no place for Christian children.

Granted then that the religious instruction of non-Christians will be given apart from the Christians, what ought to be the teaching in this class? I have already repeatedly indicated the highest point to which it should attain—the sinfulness of sin, the need of salvation, the provision for that need in Christ, in fact the teaching of the Acts of the Apostles. Take that single book as it stands; take the teaching which is actually recorded in it, instead of reading into it what inferences you please, and it furnishes a Divine model of what

the instruction of non-Christians ought to be. It assumes all natural Theology as predisposing the mind for the Gospel. It comprises the whole range of the Old Testament regarded as a preparation for Christ. It sets forth briefly the facts of our Lord's Life, Death, and Resurrection. It proclaims Him as the judge of quick and dead, and as the Saviour provided by God. Expand its teaching then to the utmost, teach in the fullest detail all the facts which it indicates in outline, and base appeals to the conscience of the pupils on the teaching thus provided. When these appeals have done their work, the way is clear for the full teaching of the Gospel. Till then it is worse than useless.

If the teacher be an earnest missionary, such an one as many of those men whose system I have been compelled to attack, he will always be on the alert for the signs of an awakened conscience. He will know, though no one else may know, how many of his non-Christian scholars regard their Scripture lesson as something more than a history class. And to these he will open out fresh truth according as they are able to receive it. I do not ignore the practical difficulties which he must encounter in making this distinction, but at least the results can hardly be smaller than those which the old system has produced.

There is one more point of importance, the rules on which I must print side by side, and record my warm agreement with the Society, and my equally

emphatic dissent from my two brother Bishops—the exclusion of the unbaptized from the school prayers of the Christian children ; nay, here I must go beyond the Society and ask them to define a little further.

S. P. G. Rule.

III.—That in schools attended by both baptized and unbaptized, the latter, whether teachers or scholars, be not present while the Christians are at prayer, save on their own spontaneous request, and with the express permission of the missionary or his representative.

Rule of the two Bishops.

III:—That in all Mission schools the work of the day shall be commenced and closed with prayer by the missionary or head-master. The prayers used, if other than selections from the Prayer Book, to be submitted for the Bishop's approval.

The two Bishops then leave it to the head-master to use any prayers he chooses out of the Book of Common Prayer, in the presence, and acting as the spokesman of children, who, half an hour after, may be doing *pūja* to Krishna ! I confess that on such a subject as this, I feel thankful for the restraint which is put upon my pen by personal knowledge of my two brethren. But the only way is to leave it alone. I can be silent, but I could not write with patience.

I would modify the S. P. G. rule by suggesting that only professed candidates for baptism should be allowed to take part in the school prayers.

Putting aside the, I should have thought, obvious objection on the score of mere reverence and propriety, the practical dilemma is the same in the case

of prayers as in that of religious instruction ; only I am far less able to comprehend how any clergyman of the Church of England at least can fail to recognise it as such.

If baptized and unbaptized children are to pray at the same time and in the same words, either the Christians must ignore baptismal rights, or the heathens must assert them. But the one class base their petitions on those rights. The other class have not received them.

Profanation is the only word which I can employ when I think of some of the collects of the Prayer Book in the lips of a heathen. Confusion is no word for the state of things which will be produced in the mind of a Christian if he kneels down day after day to offer prayers to his Father in Heaven, in which the filial relation plays no part. Is the Christian child to pray as a heathen, or is the heathen child to pray as a Christian ? Let those who bring them to use common prayers take their choice between the horns of this dilemma. I can understand its not being a dilemma to the late Dr. Wilson or Dr. Duff. But neither of these great men believed or taught the Church Catechism. My two brethren in Madras and Tinnevely teach children that when they were baptized they were made "members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven," and then they set them down with heathen children to use a common form of school prayers ! Are the heathens members of Christ ? or

have the Christians been taught a false doctrine? And if both questions be answered in the negative, which class is to adopt a false standing when they pray in common words?

It will be objected to all the foregoing that I am sketching an ideal system, while Bishop Caldwell has been guided by experience. And to this I have just two words to say in conclusion.

First, I hold that there are *principles* in Church work which must override all other considerations. The whole work being of a supernatural character, it depends for all its success upon the blessing of Almighty God, and the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit. We are fellow-workers with God, or we are nothing. All practical methods of work must therefore be continually liable to be challenged on grounds of principle. Every worker must be prepared at every stage to bring back his work to such tests. If the work be the work of God, it must be done by means which He can bless. And if my contention be right, if the principles which underlie it be well grounded, they are far too important and fundamental to be set aside on experimental grounds. What we owe to Almighty God and His truth cannot be wholly set aside by the consideration of what we owe to mankind. Bishop Caldwell, and more markedly still one writer who appeared on the same side in the *Church Missionary Intelligencer* for June, claim to treat considerations of reverence as simply "a sentimental crotchet." I do not suppose

that anything I have written will convince those who take such a view : it may perhaps serve to show them that the objection is one of principle, and not one of sentiment alone. But indeed if such a position be seriously taken up and adhered to, one feels simply that there is no more to be said. If reverence for God's revelation is liable to be treated as a sentiment, and the desire to save sacred things from profanation to be regarded as an amiable weakness, all attempts to find common ground must be abandoned as destined to fail.

But at least there is one very pertinent question which may still be put—what have been the results of the present system ? The pearls of Gospel truth have now been thrown broadcast before many generations of heathen school-boys—what is there to show for it ? If principle be brushed aside as sentiment, by all means let us appeal to practice. If we are forbidden the sentimental question—what will promote reverence for God's truth ? let us fall back on the practical consideration, whether men's souls have been saved by this means. I am not going beyond the truth when I say that I have yet to meet the writer who dares to say that is the case. The champions of unreserve in sacred things do not pretend that their system has made converts. This has not been for want of zeal in its promoters, nor for want of faith and love. Is it not, to say the least of it, *possible* that the error may have lain in the system ?

What my other points are worth I leave other people to say ; but one thing I boldly claim for myself—I have shown that the system I am attacking is not that of the Acts of the Apostles, if we read that book as it stands. At least then it is worth the experiment to try whether working like the Apostles will produce apostolic results.





